2: Boissevain E-5 (1960-1961) 1965
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at the village level. While there are Labour committees in almost all villages in Malta, not all of them have been successful in finding club premises. Where clubs have not been opened, the active members usually meet in a café or a private house.

The role of the Labour committee or club in the social life of a village is rather complex. The Labour club at all times is the centre of the local Labour supporters. During the past few years it has also been the centre of agitation against the established authority of the Church, especially in so far as it touches on secular matters. During the three years following 1955 when the Labour Government was in office, these village committees were backed by the government. Committee members thus wielded considerable power, for they provided a direct link with the established authority of the State at the national level. The same was true, but to a lesser extent, of the agents of the Nationalist Party during its period in government.

V

The qualities which the Maltese themselves consider important for a person to have in order to hold office are, of course, ideal ones. As such, they may not all be present in the same person. The leader of the St. Roque Band Club in Farrug summed these up for me as responsibility, willingness to work, courage and social status (*pozizzjoni*). Responsibility and willingness to work are self-explanatory.

Courage is a necessary quality since any person in a position to exercise some control over the action of others (especially in a society which stresses equality) is bound to be criticized by those over whom he exercises it, as well as by those who envy his position. Courage may be based on a desire to acquire power, and insensitivity to or failure to perceive criticism, or on an idealism which places the ultimate ends above the criticism of the means employed to attain them. I have known various village leaders whose courage was based upon one or more of these attributes. I have also met people who resigned from their offices because their motivation or insensitivity was not sufficiently strong to prompt them to carry on in spite of criticism. A former secretary of the social club in Kortin once summed up the reasons for his resignation with the proverb, 'Unfortunate is the one who gets

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156 577 talked about' (*Miskin min jiġi f'ilsien in-nies*). This is especially true for those persons whose social position does not permit them to remain outside the circle in which criticism and gossip circulates. For these the esteem of neighbours is more important than office.

156 554 575 Social status is the fourth quality of leadership mentioned. High status is a desirable and, in some cases, necessary quality for the holders of certain offices. The president of a band club is required to act as its ambassador and to handle its external relations; a person with high status is an obvious asset. He can meet visiting dignitaries and perform the required speech making without embarrassment to the club. Thus the president and vice-president of the clubs have often been invited to fill those offices because of their high status. Some clubs create the office of honorary patron for benefactors who are willing to lend their names – and status – to the clubs, although they take no part or interest in their actual running.

High social position is also an asset to the office of treasurer; for at some time or another he is almost sure to be accused by the village gossips of putting his hand into the purse. Considerable social distance between him and his critics renders him less vulnerable to their comments. It also makes potential critics less vocal. People are often willing to concede integrity to their superiors which they deny to their equals.

The secretary of the club does not need high status to carry out his work successfully, although it is certainly an asset. But he must have at least one of the attributes of high status, namely education; for as administrator of the club he is required to do a great deal of paper work. On the other hand, occupying one of the important offices in itself confers prestige upon a person. Thus the secretary is accorded a higher social status that he would have if he did not occupy that position, assuming for a moment that he had no other attributes which would confer status upon him.

156 463 554 871 Two important attributes of status are education and occupation. Education is the key that unlocks the world of the printed word and frees people from dependence on patrons willing to interpret it. Education also leads to better employment opportunities. Since entrance to the civil service, the professions and many commercial concerns is by competitive examination, the Maltese attach great importance to formal education.

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There is considerable difference in the social status ascribed to various jobs. Non-manual occupations have the highest status, manual occupations the lowest. The professionals – the priest, doctor, lawyer, chemist or teacher – are at the top; while the farmers are at the bottom. In many respects a government clerical officer is also at the other end of the scale from the farmer. The civil servant has a steady, relatively easy job with a good cash income and comfortable pension at the end. He also has ready access to influential persons in the government. His is a life of security and relative independence. The farmer, on the other hand, has been looked down on for centuries. He represents the traditional life of dependence: dependence upon the weather, the market, the *pitkal*, or middleman, for cash advances, the letter-writer and the patron through whom established authority has to be contacted. Education and wage labour have presented the farmer with a means of escape from that dependence and the exhausting labour in his rocky fields. Where he has had the opportunity, he has been quick to turn his back on the traditional occupation of his forefathers.

Wealth is another determinant of status. This is generally related to occupation. There has always been a considerable difference between the standard of living of the professionals and that of the average countryman. But until the past war, there was relatively little difference in the standard of living of most villagers. True, the more affluent lived in the large houses on the main square, and the poorer people lived in the alleys and streets remote from the square. Most people ate similar food, dressed alike and furnished their houses in the same way. But the increase in the level of wages, which followed the war, has changed that pattern. New houses, cars, fridges and transistor radios have become a tangible index of success and status. People are now being graded according to the number of these symbols they own.

Education, occupation and wealth are thus the chief criteria by which social position is differentiated. A person who has all these attributes has high status. But a person with high status is not necessarily a leader; for he may not possess the innate qualities required of a successful leader – courage, responsibility and willingness to work. Where a person has both high status and possesses these qualities – as well as ambition – he will undoubtedly

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156 554 be successful in the field of village politics. From there he can move into national politics.

156 178 554 561 [539] Traditionally, age was an important determinant of status. Age meant wisdom, experience and position at the head of a large family. The deference accorded to age is preserved in the proverb 'Heed well the words of the elders' (*Kliem ix-xih żomm fih*). But in a society where teenage sons work as skilled labourers, clerks and teachers while their fathers still farm or dig ditches, and where schoolboys read letters, newspapers and voting instructions to their illiterate parents, the words of the elders are often not heard. The social and cultural gap between the old and the young is wider now than it has been for many generations. Today leadership in the villages is in relatively young hands. Old parish registers support the memories of the present generation of elders that this has not always been the case.

156 463 554 591 [575] [693] Village sons who are professionals often become presidents of their local band clubs. Very often they no longer live in their native villages. Most marry town-bred girls from professional families who do not wish to leave their urban surroundings and friends to live amongst people they regard as their inferiors in every sense. Though village-born professionals find it convenient for business purposes to live in the town, most lawyers continue to practise in their native villages. But when they continue to reside in their villages, even though their social life and many of their business interests are oriented away from the community, they normally enjoy great prestige. This works to enlarge their professional clientele. These assets can easily be converted into political support, and many village doctors and lawyers have gone successfully into politics.

156 159 693 [575] Dr. Farrugia of Kortin, the town's only lawyer and its leading citizen, is a case in point. A native of Kortin, he is the son of old Manwel, the retired teacher who runs the Good Friday procession. Of a relatively modest background, he married the daughter of the former lawyer in the village, and took over the latter's large practice when he died. Past president of both the football and social clubs, a member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society, he has been president of the band club for many years. He is also a successful politician at the national level.

554 757 Frequently the government District Medical Officers are the only professionals resident in the villages in which they work.

178 434 241 because he has always been used to doing it and one which enables him to provide many of the food items needed by the family. Moreover he feels that his sons, who emigrated some years ago, will eventually wish to return to Malta and will be still enough attracted to the way of life which bred them to want to cultivate a small piece of land themselves during their retirement.

For this man, therefore, farming lacks the character of the bitter struggle with debt which it has for (a). To this extent he is typical of the large and growing number of part-time farmers in Malta today whose livelihood is provided by their non-agricultural job but who maintain a sort of residual interest in the land both as the source of 'extras' and as a link with the farming community from which they are but one generation, or less, removed.

156 241 426 The link with the land, mentioned under (d), gives both the full- and the part-time farmer a sense of independence to which he clings despite the inadequacies of farming from the economic point of view. This sense of independence is revealed in cases where the farmer is not prepared to consider taking a loan, even from the Government at only 1% interest, partly because, as he says, he is "not used to it", but rather perhaps because the variable fortunes of farming (crop failure, storm damage, market fluctuations, etc.) might make him unable to continue payment of the interest on the loan. He wants to be beholden to no-one. Even the house in which he lives was bought by him from his own savings without the help of loans (d).

THE FAMILY BUDGET

472 511 It appears that MONEY is a variable but important factor in the operation of the modern Maltese farm as an economic or uneconomic unit. Money within the household, as distinct from the farm, merits further consideration.

As already suggested, there is generally no clear distinction made by the farmer between the finances pertaining to his farm and those of his family and its maintainance. The most common practice is for there to be "one purse" (Cases VI and X). Into this go all profits from sale of produce or livestock and out of it come the costs of running farm and household. As seen, the farm unit itself is not run with a budget in most cases and there is rarely any attempt on the part of the farmer to cost-account the working of his farm as far as the labour of his family and himself is concerned [457] (Case X). Similarly it is still the exception rather than the rule to find a herdsman who keeps cost accounts of his milk production. In many cases he knows he is making a loss, though of the details he has no notion. In carrying on his farming under these conditions he seems

795 Another Malta-wide authority is the Church, but the summit of this is scarcely less remote to the farmer than is 'Il-Gvern' for in the normal practice of his religion he leans directly on the local church and priests.

829 To the farmer 'Gvern' is synonomous with control. Illiteracy has, in the past, made it very difficult for him to view authority with anything but suspicion. This has not been made easier by incompetent and condescending elements within officialdom whose actions, if any, have confirmed the doubts of the small farmer striving to provide his family with a living despite the odds against him - of which 'Gvern' was one.

178 Today the picture is changing. It is official policy
654 to "encourage investment and to improve farming methods so as to raise the efficiency of the industry to a level where it can provide a decent livelihood for those engaged in it"[38].

178 The farmers' reactions to efforts on his behalf are
156 particularly important at this crucial stage in the pro-
829 gress of agriculture in the Islands. Essentially his outlook retains much of the traditional reserve and caution of the illiterate peasant, an attitude apparent also in two further contexts, the organization within farming itself (Unions, Co-Operatives, etc.), and the farmers' attitudes towards society in general and rural society in particular.

829 The three aspects of the problem may be re-phrased as
156 (i) the farmer's attitudes to officialdom, espec- the Department of Agriculture, and 'Il-Gvern' generally,

(ii) his attitude towards other farmers and towards the industry as a whole,

(iii) his position as a member of a socially 'low' class within Malta.

[561] Within each of these the present gulf between the younger generation, with a degree of education and emancipation, and the older (including most of the Islands' full-time farmers) produces a further conflict of attitudes and aspirations.

654 THE FARMER AND GOVERNMENT

Official interest in agricultural development has increased very rapidly during the present decade and now includes a wide variety of measures aimed at improving farming by financial support and investment. These have been outlined in Section 2. There has also been an attempt to educate the farmer in better suited techniques and to make him aware of improvements which, it is believed, will increase the profit from his farm or herd. The problem here is seen to be twofold:

159 barley (xghir) fluctuate but cake-feed is all bought from
432 fodder agents. Milk production varies with season, being
234 at its peak in the Spring. The price given by the M.M.U. changes accordingly to the extent of a few pence per gallon. On the basis of an average feed programme one can get some idea of the gross profit margin on which Pawlu is working, the absence of any allowance for labour costs being noted.

*159 A sample feed programme with daily costs for one cow
234 yielding about three gallons:
43

	s	d
3 rtal xghir (barley-bran)	1	- 4
8 rtal cake.....	3	- 6
5 rtal sulla (silla).....	1	- 4
8 rtal beans (½ tomna)....	5	- 0
1 basket prickly pear.....	1	- 0
½ basket straw.....		6
	12	- 8d

Selling the three gallons at 5s 6d per gallon (see above) brings in 16s 6d per day, leaving a profit on the one cow of 3s 10d.

A sample feed programme with daily costs for 46 goats yielding about ten gallons per day:

	£	s	d
3 tmien (48 rtal) beans....	1	- 10	- 0
1 tomna xghir (barley).....		6	- 0
4 bundles sulla (silla)....		5	- 0
Furrajna (green barley)....		5	- 0
	2	- 6	- 0

Selling ten gallons per day at some 6s per gallon thereby brings Pawlu a further profit of 60s minus 46s, or 16 shillings. This, together with the 3s 10d from each of his two cows, amounts to a net income of approximately 23/8d per day.

*159 Unlike most of his fellow herdsmen in both Islands,
•156 Pawlu is fully aware of the relation between feed programmes
234 for livestock and milk yields (B/379). He does not share
232 the common view that "The more the feed the more the milk". He is also well aware of the economics of his situation as described above and, as seen, his aim is to cut the costs of fodder by producing more on his own holding and thereby increase his profit margin on milk sold. This is a most widespread feature among Maltese and Gozitan herdsmen today. But Pawlu goes further than most in that he is conscious of the need for a 'balanced diet'. Not only does he carefully regulate the types and quantities of feed which he gives but he also follows the latest researches of the Department of Agriculture, especially that of Haesler (B/252) and others working on this and similar topics. The average illiterate Maltese farmer tends to dismiss the statements and efforts of such experts as "No good for Malta, and

*159 useless in my district" but Pawlu, who has at all times in
● 156 his life been conscious of education and a knowledge of
234 things outside his village, is prepared to consider sugges-
232 tions on their merits. This attitude pervades the working of his farm as a unit and has had important repercussions within his family. (v. Section 4).

*159 In spite of his own lack of advanced formal education,
156 Pawlu has in fact an awareness of its importance which is
829 still uncommon in rural Gozo. He is constantly stressing the need for education in its widest sense, both general and technical. He is anxious for his children to be educated to a standard far above his own, while, in the wider scene, he recognizes the importance of education for the farmer and farming. His attitude to the course of lectures for farmers (Section 4) is typical of the man. He observed that "attendances at the lectures have been big because the farmers are interested - they wouldn't go if they were not". The ideas put forward by the experts are weighed by the farmer and, if considered 'good ideas', are discussed at length in the villages or at the It-Tokk market on Sunday mornings. These lecture courses for farmers, and others like them such as the important McClemont demonstrations and lectures on dairying technique (Section 4), fail for Pawlu in so far as they do not lead to individual contact between specialist and farmer. No farmer would dream of making comment or criticising 'officialdom' - with which he naturally associates ventures like those of Haesler and McClemont[50]. "The Maltese back down much more easily than do the English in their relations with the authorities. In England you might complain to a Government Department and there would be argument for a day but in Malta such a complaint would mean petty victimisation for years". The farmer blames "clerical inefficiency" in Valletta for what he considers has been the failure to follow up the McClemont or other recommendations but no farmer would seriously consider complaining in person to officialdom. They just argue and become increasingly bitter with their lot.

* Farming for Pawlu means independence. He complains of the
159 inferior social position which the farmer holds in Maltese
178 society today and observes that the present generation of
829 young people demand the means to enable them to equal the
[554] people of the towns in appearance, leisure and other superficialities. The old farmer with little formal education is not troubled by these notions. His life is the only one he can comprehend - apart from which his daily round leaves
[464] him little time to think. The youngster, on the other hand, is desperate for an eight-hour job with steady income and leisure time in place of unpaid field work with his parents.

leisure time in place of unpaid field work with his parents.

Pawlu admits nevertheless that much of the inferior condition of the farmer derives from his inability to unite with other farmers (Section 4). Illiteracy, ignorance and suspicion are the major causes of his fear. Only a few farmers are members of either of the two opposing Unions of Farmers while the situation regarding co-operatives is equally unpromising. Pawlu himself became one of the organisers of a special 'Tractor Co-Operative', initiated by C.A.R.E. at the end of 1958 (Section 2) for a group of farmers in his home village. The members paid £2 each on joining the co-operative and were thereafter able to hire one of the two tractors donated by C.A.R.E. at only 10/- per hour instead of the commercial 17s. The fact that Pawlu himself was among the organisers of such a novel venture reflects his progressive outlook, and his standing in the village.

*159 156 829 Politics interest Pawlu, to a more than average degree His concern is based on an informed intelligence. A supporter of the Labour Party, he considers the Nationalists as holding the masses in contempt and he points to their emphasis on the Italian language and the non-Maltese culture which it represented as evidence. He reads the local Maltese-language press but is sufficiently independent of mind to have cancelled his subscription to the 'Lohen is-Sewwa' (B/65) at the time of the 'Integration' referendum on the grounds that neither the Church nor the Paper would publish an 'official' statement on the attitude of the Church. Yet his religious devotion is without question and he has a respected place in Church and village life.

*159 156 829 593 [555] [169] The Family. Pawlu lives with his wife and six of his children. His eldest son and daughter are both working as teachers in Malta. Another daughter has emigrated.

Pawlu's wife speaks only Maltese and had as little formal education as her husband, but she has at all times nothing but encouragement for her family in their education In this case there is not the usual gulf in outlook between parents and children on account of the education of the latter - for the parents fully realize the need. Pawlu's [462] wife used to work in the fields when young but now spends her time in the house. Certain jobs remain her special concern however, notably cheese-making, care of lambs and chicks and egg-collection.

*159 156 108 593 [875] The eldest son, now working as a teacher, is one of the young 'intellectuals' who are currently making an appearance in Gozo. The ties of family and respect between him and his father are strong but he is out of touch with the

*159 farm and ignorant of many details of its history and oper-
● 156 ation. He is "never likely to soil his hands with farm-
178 ing". He is moving away from farming and from the cul-
593 tural and social life of his village. He apologises for the efforts of the villagers when they attempt to produce a play, he dismisses nick-names as "old-fashioned", and he decries the limitations on activity in his native Island (no dancing or bright lights). Yet he is still enough attached to Gozo to want to introduce changes to it and to make it more like the place his education has made him want to live in. He is typical of one important and growing element in the younger generation of rural Malta and Gozo. In his teens he used to help his father in the fields and took milk to the collection depot, but this stopped as soon as he found a full-time alternative occupation.

*159 Pawlu's eldest daughter, also a teacher, has left
156 farm-work far behind. For her this was never more than
593 casual assistance with vegetable picking and lifting during
46 holidays from school. It is not likely that she will be
87 a farmer's wife.

Pawlu's second daughter left school at twelve and divided her time between house and field work until her marriage in her late teens. She was acknowledged as her father's main assistant with the animals.

Two daughters in their middle teens are academically inclined to the extent of staying at school as long as possible and speaking four languages. Both still do incidental farm work when not occupied with studies. Both would be probable 'sixth-form' and university candidates were there any liklihood of financial backing. Their education, especially in English language and culture, is giving them - and many others like them - an advancement which is not matched by opportunity. They are learning in an educational cul-de-sac.

A son in his middle teens works full-time in the fields with his father, having left school at twelve, while two more boys are still of compulsory school age and give their father only casual assistance with feeding the smaller animals out of school hours. A little girl of some ten years makes no economic contribution to the farm.

*159 The major feature to emerge from the above consider-
46 ation is that the bulk of the work of the farm, and the full-time responsibility for all jobs, rests with Pawlu alone. The son who is old enough to deputise for his father has left farming: the only full-time help comes from a younger boy who may himself decide to follow his brother in a few years. Now Pawlu complains that "Labour is the main trouble if the farmer cannot cope with all the

159 829 178 244 For once a single man can be convinced of the success of a novel method or crop he will soon be copied by his fellows. Wenzu himself observes that when he had heard about the lucerne for the first time and had planted some with great success in his own fields neighbouring farmers were not slow to copy him (v. Section 4).

CASE VII : Summary.

159 (A goats' and cows' milk producer with a small land holding.)

423 **A. Land.**

427
- Has 3 timen, worked by another farmer who shares income (£21) with him.
- Holds on lease a further area which had been let out for building and brings him £32 p.a. - much more than could be obtained for its crops.
- Also rents grazing in summer months.

159 **B. Utilisation.**

241
- The 3 timen field is under sulla, barley and a few vegetables.

C. Livestock.

159
- Is changing over from goats to cattle.

23
- Goats: 1954: 60; 1957: 44; 1958: 38.

234
- Cattle: 4 Friesians. Aims to build up the herd by private import of Ayrshires of which he has a high opinion. 3 of the cattle are owned by his sons though he tends them.

159 **D. Capital.**

[454]
- No information, but appears to have some reserves.

E. Labour.

[464]
- Some assistance from a son who is in govt. employment.
- Hires no labour.
- Thus does great bulk of the work himself.

F. Production and Sales.

[434]
- Milk (Oct. 1957) 10 gallons goats' milk, 9 gallons cows' milk daily to M.M.U. Gives sons a share in income though they appear to make no payment to their father for fodder, stall accommodation etc.

[234]
- Calves and kids usually sold after weaning.

G. Husbandry.

159 23 (1) Grazing. Where possible, goats grazed out and this is said to save him 15/- a day and to reduce sulla consumption to 4 bundles daily.

[427]
- Rents 7 timen of govt. land from part-timers at £1 per month from Jun. to Aug.

[311]
- This land is good, cultivable land untended because of part-timers' inability to work it.

(2) Fodder.
- Cake, barley, potatoes, beans, sulla.
- Feeds all that the animals will take.
- Buys in bulk when prices low.
- In six months (Oct. 1957-Mar. 1958) used nearly ½ tons of cake and 15 tons of beans.

[435]
- Sulla is bought at 9/- to 16/- per hemel according to quality and uses some 200 hmiel per annum.

[434]
- Fodder costs leave very small profit margin from milk.

159 **H. General.**
- Attempting to profit from sales to M.M.U. with no knowledge of the economics involved.

156
- Extremely suspicious of agents, government etc.

159 - Has a higher opinion of his ability as a stock farmer than facts warrant.
156 - Aims to build up cattle herd in place of goats since he assumes (with no factual background) that profit will be greater.
[231] - Much influenced by personalities and is willing to accept advice uncritically if the person giving it is, in his opinion, sound.
- Lacks educational background and experience necessary to make a real profit from his herd, but seems content with present living conditions.

CASE VIII : Niklaws (A working partnership of five brothers with diversified production)

159 472 [423] [234] Niklaws is the primus inter pares in a permanent partnership of five brothers. The syndicate farms some 70 acres and, in February, 1957, had a herd of thirty cattle. There is some division of labour among the five, with one being acknowledged the expert on cattle, another "knows most about the fields", and a third the driver and general business manager. Both their father, who died in 1915, and their grandfather were farmers but the brothers have considerably added to the holding.

159 472 234 433 The emphasis of the partnership is now heavily on cows' milk production. They retain only two goats. With about 20 cows in milk they aim to produce some 50 gallons a day - Niklaws observes that the yield from cows can be maintained while that of goats fluctuates markedly with the seasons. Costs of cows' milk production are also steadier, says [232] Niklaws, with fresh greenery in the winter and prickly pear in the summer months as supplements to the standard items of diet. The fodder produced on the brothers' own fields has to be supplemented by purchased feed but judicious use is made of vegetables in glut, especially cauliflowers which could be bought by the farmer at 1s per sack in early 1957.

159 407 454 234 [427] Mechanization on the farm includes the hiring of a mould-board and tractor to deep-plow the land every fourth year (cost - £1 per tonna), and the hiring of a threshing machine. The brothers themselves own two hand cultivators and a small van, complete with the partnership insignia on the door. Currently much capital is being put into building a large, two-storey cows' shed within the village. The brothers aim to centralise their milk herd here and plan to have an adjacent exercise yard and water tank. At present their animals are divided among three widely separated byres, although all of these are easily accessible by road - and the van. [435] One of the existing sheds was built between 1949 and 1952 at a cost of "£3,000". On the costs of the present building Niklaws will divulge nothing. His attitude suggests that the money is coming from saved reserves rather than a loan, for he appears reluctant to borrow money even on low interest terms "because anything might happen to prevent the money being repaid."

181 241 809 read of successful experiments of one kind or another in a foreign land - he will only be satisfied with conclusive proof before his own eyes. Moreover the farmer often finds it hard to convince himself that some expert or high-ranking advisor on affairs agricultural can in fact be working for the benefit of the farmer and not himself. This is something new in his experience.

Mechanization.

*159 407 422 429 472 Ġanni and his brother work their machinery contracting business together, doing all but the biggest repairs. They have (1958):

(i) a three-furrow (previously a two-furrow) mould-board plow, the only one in the district,

(ii) a triple disc-plow (originally a double) for heavy ground,

(iii) a rotavator. Originally the brothers had a small rotavator but they complain that this does no more than kill off the weeds for a short time and harden the soil just below the rotavated surface. In 1958 they were buying a 5' trailer with 4 revolving claws which met with much derision from local farmers because of its weight.

(iv) a three-ton truck,

(v) a twelve-tined harrow,

They are keen to add (1958) a thresher and a small combine harvester which "might work in Malta with effect". Ġanni would rather "import a combine than let £1000 lie idle in the bank, unlike most other farmers". "New machinery soon pays for itself and is the way to make money in Maltese agriculture today". He advocates tyred tractors for Maltese conditions as they are easier to get out of rough ground and more convenient to cope with road transit. Many farmers prefer the caterpillar-tracked type (v. Case XV). He maintains that the tyred tractor is better even for the deep-plowing which he advocates. This deep-plowing has grown in popularity only slowly - Ġanni is fully aware that "there may be drawbacks", but he reckons to work his four-month season each year to the full, earning about £5 per day on six days per week. The rest of the year is taken up with contract work with the machinery on building and other sites together with some attention to the few fields held by the family. The area covered by the brothers in their plowing operations extends to something like a quarter of the area of Malta (v. B/381).

[465]

Ġanni and the village.

*159 ● 156 Ġanni is an outsider in his own village in so far as his literacy, travel and, especially, his Australian experience and his 'new ideas' have put him socially out of touch with his fellow-villagers. He maintains enough of a link with the village (through his father) to be able to live there and

*159 make money, but he has little sympathy for the older people
●156 around him and they in their turn regard him as a social (as
well as economic) rebel. He takes little part in the social
461 life of the village. Work is his first concern and he is
626 most annoyed when the priest, with whom he has "not been on
517 speaking terms" since his return from Australia, forbids
493 his working on Sundays. This includes even repair work on the machinery indoors. He knows well enough that were he to plow on Sundays or feste days he would be "publically ostracised and no villager would hire him and his plow". His relaxation is his motor-cycle on which he escapes at high speed from time to time along with others of his generation who "have eyes for the lights of Valletta rather than farming".

*159 Towards his own parents Ġanni's attitude is typical.
156 He regards his father as belonging to the old generation of
593 illiterate or semi-literate countryfolk, steeped in the conservatism of the past and the traditional. Father and son argue continuously over points of policy - with Ġanni tending to assume that his education and wider experience entitles him to something of a 'casting vote' in such arguments. Nevertheless the family tie is there and is strong enough for Ġanni to have an innate respect for his father despite the gulf in education and ideas. Thus Ġanni supported his father's scheme to plant some cotton even though he himself doubted the profitability of this move (1958).

*159 Marriage in Malta, where the "evil dowry" ('data')
156 system is maintained, holds little attraction for Ġanni.
[583] He observes that he cannot take a girl out on his motor-cycle without the older people of the village criticising him for not marrying her first. This and the whole social climate of village life in Malta of which it is part clashes with the ways he learned in Australia and with the ideas and beliefs which his education and his knowledge of the world outside the village of his birth have brought him.

Ġanni is primarily important to the village because he is staying there. He takes little part in village affairs, he does not "bother about festas", and he has few close
[178] friends in his age group of farmers. But his ideas and the new methods and implements which he has brought to the village in face of considerable opposition and ridicule are a significant item in the changing scene of Maltese farming.

CASE XV

*159 Three brothers work together as a team. Their father
402 works the land full-time and the brothers join him when their
407 joint tractor-hire business is not claiming their attention. Their mechanical activities began some twenty-two years ago and now extend over more than a sixth of the area of Malta.
000 They appear to have been among the first in the tractor